Population 195,000 by 1976, Plan Predicts

Master plan for the development of Greater Victoria and the Saanich peninsula is based on a population estimate of 195,000 by 1976, an increase of 46 per cent in a 20-year period.

This prediction is one of the results of three years' work by the staff of the Capital Region Planning Board, headed by director Brahm Wiesman.

As a basis for the plan for future development, the board staff first made an intensive study of the present status and present trends of the region's economy, population, land use, traffic and services. This work was completed last May, but the results were withheld pending publication of the master plan.

These are some of the forecasts for the next 17 years:

Number of children under 15 years of age will increase 63 per cent.

Population of working age will increase 45 per cent.

Number of retired persons living in the region will increase 23 per cent. (In other words, the proportion of retired persons will decline from the present 16 per cent of the population.)

The labor force will increase by 22,000 to 72,200.

Government service including defence will provide 7,300 more jobs.

Manufacturing will provide 1,500 more jobs and trades and services providing for the needs of the population and tourists will provide 12,200 more jobs.

Industrial development in the metropolitan area will occupy another 90 acres or 19 per cent more land. The major developments are expected to occur in wholesale trade, transportation, and manufacturing for local needs.

Commercial development in the metropolitan area will occupy another 180 acres, or 60 per cent more space.

Another 5,700 spaces or 63 per cent more parking space will be needed in the central business district.

Dwellings units will increase by 16,900 to 55,800, or 41 per cent. Of the additional units, 5,000 will be apartments. The additional dwellings will occupy another three square miles of space, not including roads, parks, schools and so forth.

School enrollment will increase 74 per cent to 35,500 pupils, with the increase proportionately greater in the high schools.

Another 270 hospital beds will be needed, an increase of 30 per cent. (But the master plan indicates the existing hospitals can be sufficiently extended.)

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If Plan to Be Completed

Merger Indicated

Victoria chamber of commerce president G. Conway Parrott said that to carry out a program of the scope outlined, "some form of amalgamation for the four Greater Victoria municipalities is indicated."

Otherwise he forsees a great many problems arising over allocation of parks, development of a new highway system, schools, hospitals, and the public library.

"The chamber of commerce has its part to play in encouraging new industry to locate here, and providing support for other worthwhile projects," said Mr. Parrott.

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Railway Over Narrows

Mainland Link 'Must' for Plan

A railway line across Seymour Narrows to connect Vancouver Island to the mainland is essential to the success of the Capital Region Planning Board's master development plan for Greater Victoria, a ratepayers' spokesman said last night.

The terminus for the line would be at Esquimalt.

Herbert Watson, president of the Victoria branch of the Vancouver Island Ratepayers' Association, said the rail connection was the only thing the group could see which would bring the master plan to reality.

He suggested the rail link should join up with the Pacific Great Eastern railway lines at Williams Lake. This would attract industries to the Island and is a move esential to the expansion of Victoria.

"The terms of union between British Columbia and the Dominion of Canada signed on Aug. 9, 1870, specified a rail connection between the Pacific and the Rockies," he said. "The same terms defined the west coast of Vancouver Island as the Pacific coast, and set Esquimalt as the terminus of the rail link."

Mr. Watson said his association had written to Transport Minister George Hees, who had replied that he was referring the matter to the Board of Transport Commissioners.

Scheduled to Sail Monday

Scheduled to sail Monday from the Somass Shipyards, Alberni, is the new all-steel ferry, Ethel Hunter, for duties on the Chemainus-Thetis Island run. The 60-foot craft is expected to make the trip around the south end of Vancouver Island in about 24 hours under her own power. She is due to start service about the first of next week. Work on wharfs at Preedy Harbor, Thetis Island and at Chemainus is nearly complete.—(Photo by Margaret E. Trebett)

Gordon Head Varsity Site

A Gordon Head site for Victoria's university is designated in the master plan for regional development.

"The expansion of Victoria College as a branch of the University of British Columbia could result in a local student body of about 2,500 toward the end of the planning period (1976) with the prospect of greatly increased enrolment in the long-term future," the report says.

"To establish a centre of higher education with excellent long-term prospects for future growth, it is obvious that the present location of Victoria College including the additional land recently acquired will prove restrictive. A new site of 150 to 200 acres is therefore designated in the Gordon Head area."

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Builder Praises Forecast

Canadian Construction Association official George Wheaton of Victoria commended the board for helping future district planners.

"Achieving this long range forecast through the separate municipalities would be hopeless," he said.

Building Land Shortage Foreseen by Master Plan

A very real shortage of good building land in Victoria region is predicted in the master plan for the area's development in the next two decades, submitted yesterday to the provincial and municipal governments.

For that reason, the plan calls for "the conservation and intelligent development and use of this relatively scarce natural resource."

As the urban area extends northward—under careful control, if the recommendations are followed—the plan calls for new major north-south highways, new east-west connecting links, a "bold" program of land acquisition for park areas, new shopping areas and, after 1976, "some decentralization of work centres."

Here are the main predictions and recommendations of the plan:

Housing

To accommodate the predicted population of 195,000 in 17 years, 6,900 new housing units will be needed.

The plan calls for servicing and development of residential land in the metropolitan area in orderly phases. Public works would be concentrated in keeping with these phases, and small-lot housing subdivisions would be limited to the development areas.

These areas would correspond to the extension of the sewer system.

To improve the layout and quality of residential areas, each phase of new residential development would proceed in accordance with a detailed residential area plan.

The plan calls for a "green belt" of farms, country homes and natural park extending up to the fringe of the urban area.

Main proposal for the present urban area is that apartment construction occur as the result of comprehensive planning for redevelopment of older residential areas.

The plan predicts that by 1976, almost a quarter of metropolitan households will be in apartments, compared with 20 per cent in 1956.

Roads

Most significant proposals are in the metropolitan area, where four new east-west cross roads are called for, partly made up of roads already in existence.

Northernmost of these would connect Cordova Bay and the Trans-Canada Highway the head of Esquimalt Harbor.

Next would be a shorter connecting link about half a mile south.

Third would be the McKenzie Avenue connection between Cadboro Bay and Trans-Canada Highway at Admirals.

Southernmost would link Cadboro Bay and the junction of the Patricia Bay and Trans-Canada highways.

To accommodate the increasing flow of north-south traffic, Blanshard would be extended to the junction of the two highways, and Store Street extended, more or less parallel to Douglas, to join the Trans-Canada Highway.

The plan calls for strict control of land use along the highways to prevent ribbon development.

Parks

The plan calls for acquisition of additional park land for large rural parks on hilltop areas at Cloak and North Hills, Mount Newton and Bear Hill, on the Rithet Estate and in the Highland area overlooking Saanich Inlet.

It proposes: Acquisition of forested land along the highway between Goldstream Park and Thetis Lake to "create a parkway approach to the region."

Acquisition of "scenic headlands" at William Head, Albert Head, Rodd Point, Macaulay Point, Gordon Head, Henderson Point and Swartz Head.

Acquisition of land for improved access to beaches is planned at 15 locations.

Linking the headlands and beaches and hilltop parks, it calls for a continuous marine drive with major new links extending north from Cordova Bay to Saanichton Bay and extending through the Highland area from Brentwood to Goldstream.

It proposed acquisition of the Cedar Hill golf course as a regional park, and suggests Burnside and Prospect Lake Road as an alternative site for a public golf course.

It calls for six major athletic fields for growing residential areas in Saanich, mostly coinciding with secondary school sites to permit joint development.

Schools

The plan proposes locations for 13 new elementary schools and six new secondary schools which it predicts will be needed in the Greater Victoria school district.

For the North Saanich school district it proposes that most new classrooms be built as additions to existing schools, but allows for a new secondary school in the Cordova Bay area.

It calls for location of the university at Gordon Head rather than on the present Victoria College property.

Commercial Areas

The plan shows 20 locations south of Royal Oak Avenue for development of district shopping centres each serving a population ranging from 5,000 to 15,000. Outside the metropolitan area, major shopping developments are shown at Sidney village and in the Langford-Colwood area.

For the downtown area, the plan has suggestions but no requirements.

It suggests six zones.

One would be a pedestrian core to create a compact central business district shopping area, allowing only the most intensive commercial uses.

The next would be a landscaped commercial area linking a civic centre on Cathedral Hill and the "government precinct" on the Inner Harbor, particularly attractive to tourist and specialty shops.

Third would be an extensive automotive area, bounded by Fort, Cook, Pandora and Blanshard, for sale and servicing of vehicles.

Fourth would be a redevelopment zone for public and private offices in the area between Government and Wharf.

Fifth would be a high-density apartment-hotel district east of the Empress Hotel.

Sixth would be a light industrial-commercial area on the northwest fringe of the central business district.

Industry

The plan looks forward to a comparatively small increase in industry, and its main proposal is that industrial development be concentrated in the existing industrial areas extending from the harbor northward along Douglas in a fairly wide band to the highway junction.

To keep an attractive entrance to the city, the plan calls for extension of Blanshard as a main artery, to join the Patricia Bay and Trans-Canada Highways at their junction, and proposes that regulations ensure attractive development along Blanshard.

Tourist Accommodation

The plan calls for two "inlying" motel zones, the first in the James Bay and Cathedral Hill area "where the highest standard of building, open space and landscaping should be enforced," and the second in the Douglas-Hillside area "which is now ripe for redevelopment."

It also provides for tourist accommodation along the old Island Highway and just south of Sidney and near Beaver Lake.

Students May Hear About Plan

Capital Region Planning Board officials plan an approach to Greater Victoria school boards for permission to explain the master plan to senior high school students.

The suggestion came from a Saanich councillor who feels that today's senior students are the persons who will be most affected by the scheme if it is adopted by councils.

CRPB officials will also address clubs and organizations throughout the area to publicize the plan and answer questions about it.

Licence Lifted, Jail for Driver

Alfred Simmons Tengelly, 3915 Carey, was sentenced to 14 days in jail yesterday when he pleaded guilty in Sidney court to a charge of impaired driving, Jan. 19.

It was his second offence of the kind. His driver's licence was suspended for 60 days.

Telegraphs Ask Increase

A penny-a-word increase in the cost of telegraphs is being asked by Canadian Pacific Communications and Canadian National Telegraphs.

An application to that effect has been lodged with the Board of Transport Commissioners, on the grounds of increased wages and other expenses.

The proposed increase would be 10 cents per 10-word full-rate message with increases of one cent for each additional word. Proportionate increases would be made for night letters and day letters.

The board is expected to hear the application late next month.

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